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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

24 October 1961

DRAFT

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Guidance for the Preparation of the WEEKLY SURVEY OF COLD WAR CRISIS SITUATIONS

REFERENCE: USIB-D-28.4/2, 16 August 1961, Attachment B

1. Basic guidance for the preparation of the Weekly Survey of Cold War Crisis Situations is contained in the Reference, which reproduces the report of the Ad Hoc Committee as approved by the USIB on 15 August 1961. Additional guidance has been provided by USIB discussions and decisions in particular cases and by working agreements developed within the working group. The purpose of this memorandum is to codify these directives and conventions for the information and guidance of all who contribute to the preparation of the Weekly Survey.

Purpose

2. The basic purpose of the Weekly Survey is to provide "early warning of developing 'cold war' crisis situations." In this context,

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the term "cold war" is used to distinguish this function from the "hot war" early warning function of the Watch Committee and is not intended to restrict consideration to situations in which there is a direct Sino-Soviet involvement. The requirement is for early warning of any trend which, if unchecked, would be likely to affect seriously US interests in a given country or area.

3. The USIB has recognized that, on occasion, the Weekly Survey and the Watch Committee may both report on the same situation. Such occasional duplication of coverage is considered preferable to accepting a chance that the situation might go unreported because each group expected the other to cover it. Moreover, the two reports would be from different points of view, the Weekly Survey concentrating on the cold war aspects of the matter, the Watch Committee on the possibility of its developing into "hostile action by the Sino-Soviet Bloc."

4. The key words of the prescribed mission are early warning of developing crisis situations. This is not a matter of promptly reporting events which have already occurred, or of providing running comment on all current developments of "cold war" significance. The function is estimative and occasional: to anticipate,

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as far in advance as possible, an impending crisis, and to call attention to that potentiality. To be effective as warning, the report should treat only those situations in which a specific critical development is foreseen as contingently likely, and should state its warning distinctly, without burying it in extensive (and perhaps equivocal) analysis. In sum, the Survey should be estimative in character, highly selective rather than comprehensive, direct and brief in its treatment of particular situations, and distinct from current intelligence reporting.

Prescribed Format

5. The Weekly Survey is divided into two sections and an annex. Emergent situations not previously identified as potentially critical are treated in Section I. Significant changes in previously identified situations are treated in Section II. The Annex is a checklist of situations previously identified as potentially critical and regarding which there is no significant change to report.

6. Manifestly, it is Section I that performs the early warning function of the Survey. Section II and the Annex perform the

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corollary function of keeping track of those situations regarding which warning has been given.

7. It is not the function of Section II to provide a running account of week-to-week developments in situations already identified as potentially critical. (That is the function of current intelligence.) An entry should be made in Section II only when there has been a change in the situation (or in our appreciation of the situation) so substantial as to warrant its reassessment. In such cases, the object of the entry is not to report current happenings, but to present a new estimative appreciation. When a situation is dropped from further listing in the Annex, the reason for doing so should be shown by means of an entry in Section II.

8. The Annex is intended to be no more than a checklist. The USIB has ruled that with respect to well-known critical situations (e.g., Berlin, Laos) it is sufficient to name the subject and to cite any still-valid NIE relating to it. In less well known cases, however, or when there is no valid NIE to cite, a brief textual entry is required.

9. The purpose of a textual entry in the Annex is merely to remind the reader of why the subject came to be listed in the first place. Consequently, entries in the Annex need give only

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the essence of previous treatments in Sections I and II. Therefore they should not require frequent alteration. It is agreed, however, that they should be amended as occasion may require to keep them up to date with developments not of sufficient importance to warrant treatment in Section II.

Responsibility and Procedures.

10. The task of preparing the draft Weekly Survey for USIB consideration is assigned to the Board of National Estimates in coordination with designated USIB Representatives. This assignment of responsibility does not constitute a new USIB subcommittee. It is analogous to the normal procedure for the preparation of National Intelligence Estimates, although the time available for each weekly edition of the Survey is, of course, much more limited.

11. Any draft texts proposed for the forthcoming Survey, and any other proposals regarding coverage, should reach [redacted] 25X1  
6-F-19 Langley Bldg. [redacted] by 1600 on Monday. 25X1

With a proper exercise of discretion, suggestions regarding the introduction of new subjects, or the retention or deletion of old ones, not involving the transmission of classified text, can generally be made by telephone. With prior notice to [redacted] 25X1  
classified text can be transmitted via the gray phone system  
[redacted]

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12. As early as possible on Tuesday morning, a consolidated draft text for the Representatives' consideration is sent by special courier to designated delivery points. (Any delays in transmission from these points to the addressees personally are, of course, an internal matter which the addressees themselves must correct.)

a. By direction, this consolidated draft must include any text submitted by any Representative. On occasion, this requirement will result in the inclusion of alternative treatments of the same subject.

b. Except as later developments may require it, the Representatives will not be expected to act on any material not included in substance in this draft or in the preceding edition of the Survey.

13. The Representatives meet at Langley at 1000 on Wednesday to act on the draft submitted to them on Tuesday. The object of this meeting is to produce a fully agreed text for submission to the USIB.

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a. Typical matters requiring the Representatives' joint consideration are:

- (1) Whether an item proposed for Section I actually establishes the existence of a trend which, if unchecked, could result in a crisis situation -- as distinguished from ordinary trouble or disappointment.
- (2) Whether an item proposed for Section II actually establishes a substantial change in the situation, or the likelihood of such a change -- as distinguished from current events in an essentially unchanged situation.
- (3) How to handle alternative drafts on the same subject: whether to adopt one (with or without modifications) and reject the other, or to combine the two, or what.

b. Of course such a meeting may also consider and accept textual changes intended for clarification or to improve the form of expression. It is agreed, however, that new subjects on which the Representatives have not been forewarned to take counsel should not be introduced except in cases of urgent necessity.

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c. If full agreement cannot be reached on any matter, the draft submitted to USIB will show the alternative text proposed by the dissenting Representative -- that is, any Representative's divergent view will be presented, if he insists, as an alternative text, identified as to source, rather than in a footnote.

14. The draft text resulting from the Representatives' meeting is disseminated to the USIB members as soon as possible after the conclusion of the meeting, for consideration and adoption by the USIB on Thursday.

15. Final publication and dissemination of the Weekly Survey, as approved by the USIB, is accomplished by [ ] (Chief, Intelligence and Information Staff, OGI), 7-G-17, Langley Bldg.

25X1

[ ] Any communications regarding this final dissemination should be addressed to him.

25X1

16. While adherence to established rules and conventions, as set forth above, serves to facilitate the normal conduct of business, the preparation of the Weekly Survey remains essentially dependent on the exercise of responsible judgment and discretion by the Board of National Estimates and the USIB Representatives. No convention can properly be cited as a bar to the exercise of such judgment as occasion may require it.

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